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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 001099

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NP/MNA (B. WARD), GENEVA FOR CD DELEGATION

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SUBJECT: SPAIN: RESPONSE TO NPT PREPCOM III DEMARCHE

REF: STATE 63169

Classified By: KATHLEEN FITZPATRICK, POLITICAL COUNSELOR.
REASON: 1.4 (B) & (D).

1. (C) We presented reftel points to Marcos Rodriguez Cantero in the office of International Disarmament Affairs at the MFA on March 30. Rodriguez, who will be Spain's delegate to the PrepCom, said Spain would support U.S. proposals to strengthen the IAEA Board of Governors and the Proliferation Security Initiative to ensure that nations comply with international safeguard obligations on non-proliferation. He also agreed that linking procedural issues to agreement on substantive issues at the PrepCom is a non-starter. Gaining consensus on non-proliferation issues should be the top priority, he said.

2. (SBU) Rodriguez pointed out that Spain ratified the IAEA Additional Protocol in 1999. As current chair of the Board of Governors, Spain expects the Protocol to come into force before May 1, so that the countries that join the EU on May 2 will be bound by it.

3. (C) Rodriguez expressed concern about restricting exports of sensitive nuclear fuel-cycle technology. He cautioned that such restriction could create a more lucrative market for nuclear fuel-cycle technology, which could either influence more countries to develop nuclear technology or give countries of concern, like the Iran and the DPRK, a stronger economic impetus to continue to develop and share sensitive technology. Rodriguez believes export restrictions could also create an international export 'cartel' that would exclude smaller producers of nuclear fuel-cycle technology in countries like Brazil and Mexico. Rodriguez does not foresee export restrictions becoming an issue at the PrepCom. However, he expects the issue will be raised at next meeting of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and may pick up momentum leading up to the 2005 NPT Review Conference.
ARGYROS